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Second Edition.

# Home-Bottled Fruits .

# and How to do Them.

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# FOREWORD.

This little work aims at describing the process of bottling fruit, on a small scale, at home, for home consumption. Except bottles and a thermometer, no special apparatus is required. The book does not profess to cater for the professional bottler, who is usually provided with apparatus, steam heated, by which he can readily treat large quantities of fruit. The principles involved, however, will be the same in either case.

It is especially the home that is kept in view, and every little detail, the result of ten years' experience in bottling, which is likely to prove serviceable, has been given. All who now make their own jams, marmalades, and pickles should try their skill at fruit bottling. The process is remarkably simple, and with pains success will be certain. Fruit bottling at home is likely to become highly popular when its possibilities are understood, and hence the need for reliable information on the subject.

G. W. S. Brewer.

*Nailsworth, Glos.,*
*Sept., 1908.*

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# NOTE to SECOND EDITION.

The fact that the first Edition of this little work has been sold out within a week or so of being placed on the market in 1909, and even before anything in the way of Fruit Bottling could be attempted, shows clearly that it meets a want. Advantage has been taken of the issuing of a Second Edition to make a few necessary alterations, but these are of minor importance. For the Introduction my thanks are due to Mrs. Playne, a lady who takes a prominent and lively interest in all matters relating to Education and Home Life.

G. W. S. Brewer.

*Nailsworth,*
*June, 1909.*

# AN INTRODUCTION.

I have great pleasure in supplying an introduction to this little work on Fruit Bottling. It appears to me to be closely allied to the educational work in which I am deeply interested, the education of Home-making, where cookery figures as a leading subject.

The first principle in Home-making is a *wise economy.* Unfortunately this a a quality in which we English of all classes are lamentably deficient. Amongst us wastefulness is even sometimes admired and economy despised. In Germany and France people of all classes undoubtedly get far more out of their material than we English do.

As regards the economy effected by preserving home-grown fruits, it is true that bottled fruit may be bought at no great expense, but when there is more fruit in the garden than is required by the family, or when fruit is exceptionally cheap, bottled fruits may be had for almost nothing, as the author of this little booklet clearly shows. I entirely agree with the author that Horticultural Societies would do well to encourage this valuable little home industry. I sincerely hope that at all Flower and Industrial Shows, as at Longfords, we may see good exhibitions of bottled fruits, dried fruits and preserves of all descriptions.

M. E. PLAYNE

Longfords,
June, 1909.

# *Home-bottled Fruits*
*. and .*
# *How to do them.*

THE bottling of fruit at home is to a very great extent of recent introduction, and even yet it has not passed its infantine stage. It is, however, an art that will rapidly grow and develop, when its possibilities are understood, and within the next year or two, we shall be greatly mistaken if up-to-date Horticultural Societies do not introduce into their schedules classes for the display of Home-bottled Fruits. Such classes would by no means be the least attractive features of the shows, and further, the Societies that interest themselves in this question by providing prizes for such produce will be doing a good work for fruit-growing at home. Bottling provides an excellent means of using surplus fruit, and further than that bottled fruit will be likely to a certain extent to take the place of jam, for if carefully prepared it is possible to have delicious fruit all the year round, and that at a very small cost.

It is a very simple undertaking to bottle fruit at home, and one which does not require any costly apparatus. To be successful, however, it is first necessary to have a good idea of the general principles governing the art, and further than that, there are a few little details—the outcome of several years' experience in fruit bottling on our part, which we shall in the course of this work describe, and which will enable anyone to undertake fruit bottling without risk of failure.

Fruit to be bottled should be as carefully selected as if it were intended for jam making, in fact, we would specially urge the importance of *using the best fruit only, and that in perfect condition.* Thinnings of trees may be used but are not recommended. As a general rule, the fruit used should be rather under ripe.

*Any fruit to be used may be first washed* and this should always be done when it is at all dusty or dirty. To wash fruit, place it in a colander and allow water from tap to swill over it thoroughly. By this means the water will drain away and thus leave fruit ready for use. There is no need for the fruit to be dried before bottling. It is best to gather soft fruits, such as raspberries, when the weather is dry, as otherwise some of the fine flavour will be lost, but as regards other fruits there is no necessity to study the weather as to when they shall be picked. Make sure that a careful selection of fruit is made and handle it as little as possible. Best of all is the fruit which can be gathered in one's own garden and used direct, but failing this make sure that a good class fruit in fresh condition is obtained. Almost all kinds of fruits may be bottled with success—gooseberries, raspberries, currants, plums, pears and many others. Different fruits require slightly different treatment, and therefore, we have dealt with the principal fruits separately. Whole fruit is bottled either in syrup or in water, and if syrup is used then the best lump sugar should be employed for that purpose, for preserving sugar often contains particles which in syrup can only be got rid of by straining.

Fruit bottles and covers should be thoroughly clean, and it is as well to rinse the bottles out with cold water before filling with fruit.

# APPARATUS.

The necessary apparatus is of the simplest kind : bottles, a thermometer, and either a pot, a large saucepan or a furnace meeting all requirements. The selection of bottles is most important.

These can often be obtained locally. They vary in price according to size and make. It is well to purchase two sizes, a small one, say 24 to 32 ounces, for soft fruits, and a larger one, say, 40 ounces, for fruits like plums. The bottles should have wide mouths and they are to be preferred if fitted with glass rather than metal lids. Metal lids rust and perish and need to be replaced every two or three years, which is not the case with glass caps. A bottle should not cost more than sixpence, and while it will be expensive to purchase a stock of bottles at this price, yet it must be borne in mind that the outlay may be regarded as capital expenditure, for with ordinary care the bottles will last year after year.* At the outside, the *average yearly cost* of a bottle should be less than a penny. This is an important point to consider, and therefore, when bottles are required the very best obtainable should be purchased—they will prove cheapest in the end.

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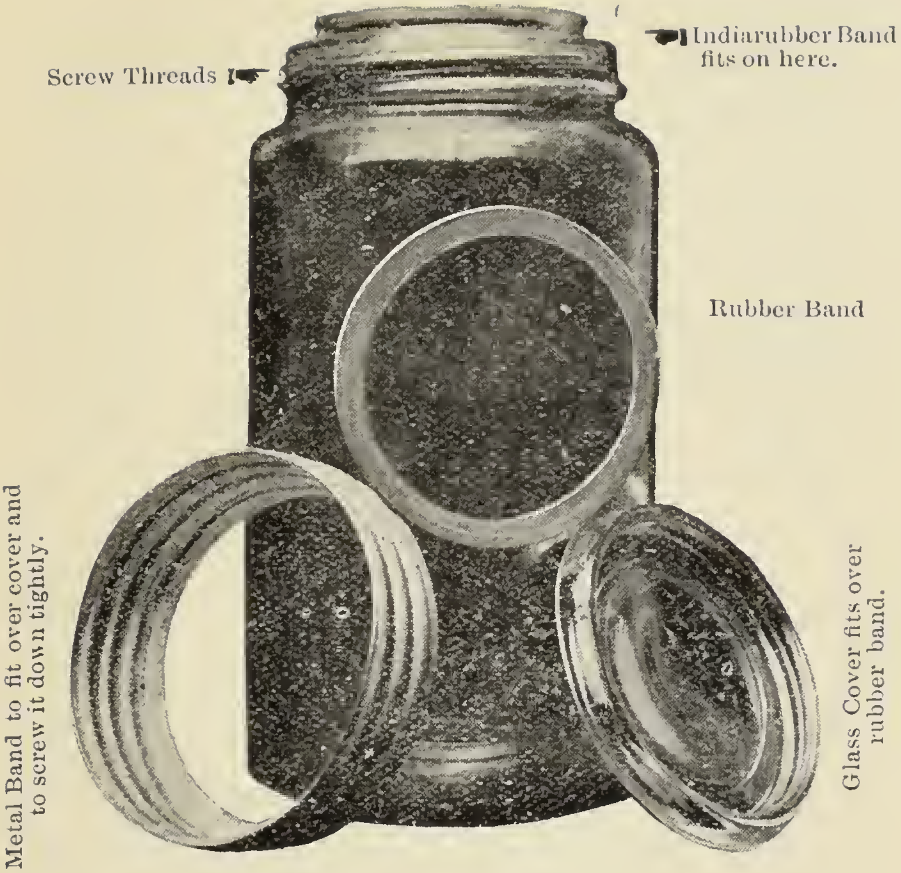
*Prices of best English made bottles with glass tops will be sent on application. G. W. S. Brewer, Nailsworth.

The essential of any bottle is, that it can be made perfectly air-tight. [It may be that a stock of bottles is already in hand and that it is desired to still use these. It is a matter of difficulty to make these perfectly air-tight even if good strong corks be used and these well driven in and sealed with paraffin wax or a mixture of Stockholm pitch and resin. We have, however, been fairly successful in the use of bladder. The bottles are first tied down with bladder and then placed in the cooking vessel, and when the contents are sufficiently sterilised, they are tied down again, as tightly as possible, with a second piece of bladder over the first. However, if the yearly cost of new corks, and wax or bladder, be considered it will be found that the patent bottles are by far the more economical.] We therefore advise the discarding of sweet bottles, etc., for the results, no matter how carefully the operations have been performed, will in most cases prove unsatisfactory. We shall be pleased to give further advice if any difficulty in procuring suitable bottles is experienced.


Screw Threads
Indiarubber Band fits on here.
Rubber Band
Metal Band to fit over cover and to screw it down tightly.
Glass Cover fits over rubber band.

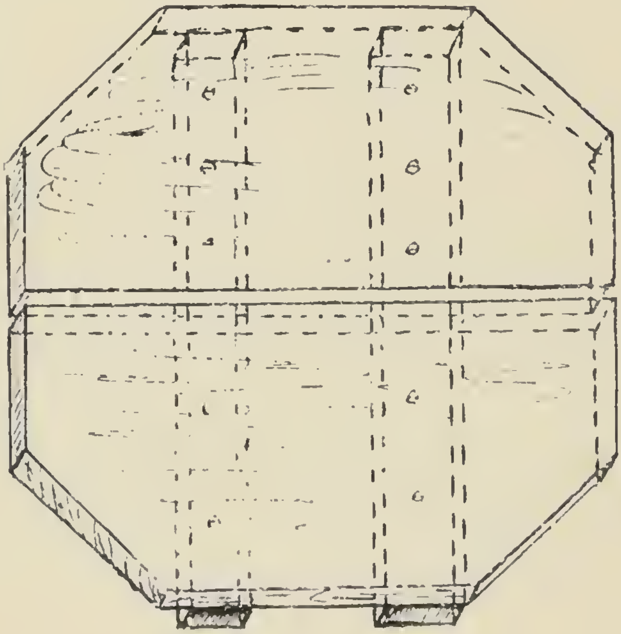
EMPTY BOTTLE SHOWING PARTS.

Bottles.—While then it is not absolutely essential to have special bottles for bottling purposes, yet it is very much better to have these, as by their use the ease and certainty with which the process can be conducted are strong points in favour of their employment. As pointed out previously, the cost is only one of a first outlay. Different makes of bottles vary somewhat, but the principle is practically the same in all. The bottle has on its neck threads upon which a metal cap or ring can be screwed or otherwise fastened. A metal or glass cap is used to cover the top, and this fits upon an india-rubber ring which is placed on a ledge near the top of the bottle. A metal screw band or a strong spring clip is used to hold the cap tightly in position when the sterilizing process is completed and until the covers are secure. This should make the bottle air-tight, so that no air can enter the bottle.

We can now explain the reason of the process. The contents of the bottle are heated to a certain temperature, and the cover of the bottle is only loosely fastened in position. The heat causes all the air (containing germs that cause decay) that may be in the bottle to be driven out, and its place is taken by steam and fruit vapour. Now, if the cover is securely fastened down while the temperature is high, then air (with germs) cannot enter. The bottle is allowed to cool gradually, and this causes the steam and fruit vapour which fills the space between the top of the liquid and the cover to condense into water and fruit syrup. Thus an *empty space* or *vacuum* is formed between the top of the contents of the bottle and the lid. Now Nature abhors a vacuum, and from all sides air presses firmly down on the cover in its endeavour to get inside, with the result that the lid is kept in position by the outside pressure of the atmosphere. When, therefore, the bottle and its contents are perfectly cold the screw band or clip may be removed and the lid should, if air-tight, remain tightly fixed upon the indiarubber ring. Here then is the reason of the whole process.

A thermometer can be obtained at any chemists for about a shilling. One with flat glass and round wood for dairy use is very suitable. A round glass thermometer weighted with bulb is a little more expensive, but it will stand steady in the cooking vessel, and that is a great advantage. If the thermometer rises in the water it can be weighted by tying a little bag of shot to the bottom. We use a zinc dairy thermometer which cost a shilling and which answers the purpose admirably. In any case have a thermometer which can be thrust or stood in hot water; and see that it is eight to nine inches long and with the figures plainly marked.

A pot, a large saucepan, or a furnace will complete the outfit, except that a wooden platform should be made on which to place the bottles during the cooking process. This wooden platform is a very simple affair and can be made at home. Two pieces of wood about half an inch to three-quarters of an inch thick will be required. Cut these roughly to the shape of the cooking vessel used and so that the two pieces when nailed together by means of two cross pieces underneath will fit into the vessel. The cross pieces will allow the platform to be raised above the bottom of the cooking vessel and will also allow of free circulation of the water. The accompanying diagram will show exactly what is required.



If the furnace is used then the platform should be made to stand about 6 to 8 inches off the bottom. To keep it in this position it will be necessary to tie or otherwise fasten a weight (a brick will do) underneath it to keep it in position. For an ordinary sized furnace two pieces of wood about 16 inches long and eight inches wide, nailed together with cross pieces and then the corners sawn off will do excellently. Do not let the two pieces of wood touch each other by about a quarter of an inch and then this will allow a piece of string for fastening the weight to be below the surface of the platform and so not interfere with its evenness. The bottles when ready will be placed on this wooden platform. *On no account* must the bottles stand direct on the metal of the vessel or breakages will occur. One bottle, or several, may be done at a time and the process is similar in all cases. We find that an ordinary sized furnace will accommodate about 12 bottles at a time, while a large pot will take six or seven, and a large saucepan two or three.

# GOOSEBERRIES.

Gooseberries are generally bottled when green, and they are fit for use as soon as they are *full grown, but still quite green.* Keepsake, Whinham's Industry, and other varieties are all excellent for bottling. After topping and tailing, the fruit may be placed in the bottles, which should first be rinsed out with water. From time to time as the filling proceeds the fruit should be well shaken down, and to do this knock very gently the bottom of the bottle on some solid piece of wood such as a table, taking care not to break the bottle. The after appearance of the bottle will depend very much upon the manner in which it is packed with fruit. Fill each bottle to within about an inch and a half of the top. Either syrup or water must next be poured into each bottle so as to cover the fruit. *There should be about an inch clear space between the top of the liquid and the cover* to allow for expansion of the fruit and syrup when heated. For gooseberries we always use water in preference to syrup but those who would like to use syrup may find recipe for making it on page 21. Place cover in position, and *screw on lightly only. If caps with clips are used they are fastened* *on and not touched until the sterilising is completed and the bottles quite cold.* Take pains to see that the rubber rings and caps fit perfectly. When the bottles are all ready they may be placed on the wooden platform already described, in the pot or other vessel which should be on the fire. Take care that each bottle does not quite touch either of its neighbours. If this is done the packing with hay or cloths may be entirely dispensed with. Next pour in *cold* water as high as the vessel will allow, but not higher than the bases of the necks of the bottles. Stand the thermometer in the vessel. The water should be *gradually* heated until a temperature of about 160 degrees Fahrenheit is reached. On the slow, even, and gentle rise of the temperature will depend much of the success in obtaining fruit with uncracked skins. This part of the sterilising ought to take about an hour, but if the temperature has been reached in much less time than an hour, it is better to keep at 160 degrees for about 10 minutes, or else to further raise the temperature of the water until 165 degrees are reached, so as to ensure the contents of the bottles being at the same temperature as the water of the vessel. If the vessel is on a fire, lift it off carefully, after having first removed the bottles. If a furnace is used rake out the fire. If gas or oil is the heating agent then turn it off. Each bottle should now have its cover securely fastened down, and then be replaced in the vessel and allowed to cool gradually. While the cooling is taking place the lids may once or twice be examined, and if necessary further tightened. *By-the-bye, always take the precaution to wrap a cloth or duster round each bottle when handling it while hot, and especially when fastening down lid.* It is possible a bottle may crack, and the cloth in such a case would prevent harm from splinters of glass. We may remark, however, that in the hundreds of bottles we have prepared we have never had a bottle burst; but still, accidents of this kind may arise, and it is as well to be safeguarded. When the bottles are *perfectly cold* unscrew the metal bands where this type of bottle is used, or remove the clips, and if perfectly air-tight then the lid will be quite fast upon the rubber ring. Before replacing the screw bands wipe carefully the threads of the bottles and bands and smear a little vaseline on them. If this is not done then a little syrup may be on the bands, and hence when the fruit is required for use the bands may be found stuck and difficult to remove.

In the event of a bottle not proving air-tight, it should be again placed in a vessel of cold water with the top lightly screwed on and heated as before, and when quite cold be again tested. It may be, on rare occasions, that even a third attempt may be necessary, but this does not often happen if the above directions have been carefully followed, especially bearing in mind that the bottles are not to be tested until *quite cold*. The bottles are then stored away upright, and the contents may be used in like manner to green gooseberries fresh from the garden.

Ripe gooseberries are generally eaten uncooked, and it is not advisable to bottle when in this state.

## RASPBERRIES.

Raspberries should not be dead ripe when picked for bottling, and yet they should be sufficiently ripe to be firm and to part readily from the cores. It is often an advantage to pick the raspberries direct into the bottles and thus save handling as much as possible. If this is done, care must be taken to avoid fragments of leaves, etc., from falling into the bottles and thus spoiling their appearance. Raspberries are often disfigured by grubs and frequently grubs are found in the raspberries. If such is the case they should be carefully looked over before being bottled. Shake fruit well down from time to time as the filling proceeds and fill each bottle to within about an inch and a half of the top. We recommend raspberries, a sweet fruit, to be always bottled in syrup, and this may be made according to instructions below. When the bottles have been thus filled and either water or syrup added so as to just cover the fruit, screw the caps on lightly or place caps and clips in position, and treat as described for gooseberries.

We find, however, that these do better if raised to about 155 degrees, and then are allowed to remain at this temperature for about 10 to 15 minutes before they are securely fastened down. The aim should be to have each raspberry whole when the operation is completed.

*Raspberries and Red Currants*, *or Raspberries and Black Currants* may be bottled together, and so treated are excellent for serving as stewed fruits with Custard or Blanc Mange or for making into tarts and puddings.

## SYRUP.

For each pint of water allow about ¼lb. best lump sugar. Put into a suitable vessel on the fire, and stir till sugar is dissolved. Boil for about 10 minutes taking off any scum that may appear. Set this solution on one side to cool and when cold the syrup may be put into the bottles of fruit. It is quite as economical, if not more so, to bottle fruit in syrup than in water, for, whenever the fruit is to be used sugar must be added. If syrup is used in bottling it helps considerably to retain the flavour and appearance of the fruit. Most fruits bottled in water are flavourless and of poor colour. With slight variations this syrup will answer for practically all fruits.

## CURRANTS.

Currants need to be carefully picked so that as far as possible each fruit may remain whole. This is hardly attainable when the fruit is hurriedly stripped off the bushes. If a bottle is required for exhibition purposes it may be as well to pick the currants in bunches and then cut each fruit off separately with a pair of scissors. This of course takes much longer and is not necessary for household purposes. Currants may, if clean, be picked direct into the bottles, care of course being taken to let no foreign matter enter the bottles. Fill the bottles and treat exactly as recommended for raspberries. Currants answer very well, especially black currants, if done in water. Personally, we prefer them prepared in syrup.

*Black Currants and Rhubarb* form an excellent mixture. Use three parts of black currants to one part of rhubarb. First wash rhubarb, then skin and cut into pieces about 2 inches long. The pieces may be put in here and there with the currants.

## STRAWBERRIES.

As strawberries are generally eaten uncooked this fruit does not form a good subject for bottling either regarded from the standpoint of flavour, appearance or usefulness. If required they should be carefully selected when the berries are ripe but still nice and firm—small fruit is better than large. They should be bottled in syrup made slightly heavier than that for raspberries. Bottle and sterilise exactly as recommended for raspberries. Store in a dark cupboard or the colour of the fruit will fade. Strawberries may be bottled in a syrup made by boiling one pint of red currant juice (in place of water) with each half pound of sugar. This is said to greatly improve flavour and appearance.

## LOGANBERRIES.

This fruit is gradually coming into common use. It has a distinct flavour of its own and may not on that account suit all palates. Loganberries should be bottled in syrup, heated to a temperature of 160 degrees, and kept at that temperature for at least ten minutes, before being tightly fastened down.

## MORELLO CHERRIES.

Morello Cherries may be bottled whole in syrup. They should be heated to about 165 degrees, and allowed to remain at this temperature for about 10 minutes. Some prefer to stone them before bottling.

## PLUMS.

The plum family is certainly the most popular and profitable for bottling purposes It is, as a rule, the cheapest fruit to purchase and where one has plum trees they often bear abundantly, and as the plum season is very brief they must be used up quickly. Bottling then comes in very useful.

For bottling purposes one of the finest plums is the yellow plum, known as the Pershore. It can often be purchased at less than a penny a pound so that a bottle can be filled for about twopence. It should be picked when still green, but yet just on the point of becoming ripe. The plums should be carefully packed in the bottles and the handle of a wooden jam spoon is often useful to make a refractory plum fit just into its right place. Shake the plums well down into the bottles and fill with syrup to within about an inch of the top. Unless the plums are well packed in the bottles before the syrup is added it will be found that after sterilising, the fruit will stand some way up the bottle and thus somewhat spoil the appearance. In packing, guard against bruising or cracking the fruit. If any fruits are a little cracked or otherwise disfigured, then place in the bottle with best side outwards. Plums should be slowly raised to a temperature of 165 degrees. If the fruit is very ripe only allow the temperature to reach 160 degrees. Keep at the required temperature for about 15 minutes before firmly screwing down.

Pershore plums, if carefully done, are of a lovely golden colour and their flavour is delicious.

Victoria plums is another favourite bottling subject. Medium sized fruit should be selected. Bottle in syrup and treat like Pershore plums.

Greengage, Czar, Monarch, and other plums may be similarly bottled. Goliath, with peach-like flavour, is an excellent plum for this purpose.

Plums may also be bottled by another method. Instead of placing fruit in bottles and sterilising, it may be placed in bulk in an enamelled pan, covered with syrup and brought to a temperature not exceeding 180 degrees and kept at this temperature for a few minutes only, if necessary. Meanwhile the bottles should be warmed by having some hot water (not boiling) poured into them and afterwards emptied, or they may be warmed in an oven. The rubbers should also be put into hot water and warmed.

When the plums, still whole, are sufficiently cooked they should be most carefully ladled into the bottles. The difficulty in doing this is to keep the plums whole. Fill bottles nearly full with syrup, and fasten down immediately. Bottles done by this method can be more closely packed with fruit, but there is much more danger of the fruit being broken than if the plums are cooked in the bottles separately. When cold the bottles should be tested, and if not air-tight they should be placed in a cooking vessel on the wooden platform, and raised to a temperature of 160 degrees, and then screwed down firmly again. This method of bottling can be employed where large quantities are to be done, as it can be performed very much quicker than when the sterilising is done in the bottles. We much prefer the other method.

## DAMSONS.

Damsons are, if anything, the easiest and most satisfactory of all fruits for bottling. For one thing their size allows them to lie closely together, and thus they can be well packed in the bottles. They should be done in syrup and treated as recommended for plums.

## PEARS.

Pears are excellent when bottled, and they may be done at home equal, if not superior to the Californian bottled fruits now on the English market. First, a good pear for stewing should be obtained. Windsor or Catillac, as well as others, are excellent varieties. Pears to be bottled should be prepared exactly as if they are to be dished up and served at table as stewed pears (see next page), and when in this state the fruit should be placed in warm bottles. Warm the rubbers also. Fill each bottle with syrup to within about an inch of the top and immediately fasten the lid securely. When quite cold test to see if air-tight. If not, the bottle with fruit in should, with its covering *lightly* screwed on, be placed on platform in a vessel of water and heated to 160 degrees and then the cover again made secure. When quite cold, test again.

### *Recipe for Stewing Pears for Bottling.*

Prepare a syrup, by using half-a-pound of best lump sugar to each pint of water. [By some, stewed pears are preferred when flavoured; and this can be done by putting lemon juice, spice, ginger, wine, etc., into the syrup.]

Each pear should be peeled, cut into halves, cored and immediately placed in the syrup to prevent discolouration. When ready, place the vessel on the fire and bring to the boil and then allow the pears to *simmer gently* until they can be easily pierced with a needle. Care should be taken that they are not allowed to break. Thus prepared they are ready for bottling according to the instructions already given.

[If fruit is required of a deep pink colour this may be obtained by adding a few drops of cochineal or a small quantity of red currant juice, shortly before removing from the fire.]

## APPLES.

As apples may now be obtained nearly all the year round there is not the need for bottling this fruit as exists in other cases.

It may be, however, that some may wish to bottle a portion of their own surplus crop of apples. If so, prepare in the same manner as recommended for pears, taking care to watch the apples carefully, as unlike pears some apples tend to cook to a pulp. Apples and mulberries together bottle very well and are nice for tarts or as stewed fruit. Apples and Blackberries, too, is another good mixture.

## BLACKBERRIES.

This favourite fruit can generally be obtained in abundance in the country in Autumn while town dwellers can buy it very cheaply. Blackberries alone are rather inclined to be "seedy" and therefore it is perhaps better to bottle them with apples. Where, however, it is wished to bottle this fruit, follow exactly the directions given for raspberries.

———:o:———

There are other fruits such as peaches, apricots, figs, etc., which may be bottled. We have, however, restricted ourselves to describing those fruits which are commonly in demand. If peaches and apricots are bottled, the fruit should be cut in halves and the stones removed. A few kernels may be added for flavour if necessary. Bottle then as recommended for plums.

——:o:——

*Cranberries*, *Whortleberries*, or *Bill-berries* are plentiful in some places and are most useful for tarts when bottled similarly to currants.

## TOMATOES.

Many persons during the season have a surplus of tomatoes and to such, a recipe for bottling should be valuable. The following will be found to answer excellently from all points of view. We use for this purpose the 2lb., size bottles which will take rather less than 1½ lbs. of tomatoes (weighed before cooking). Select the smallest tomatoes and prick each in several places with a needle. Make a syrup using 2 ozs. sugar to a pint of water, adding a little lemon juice if preferred. Put tomatoes into this syrup and place in a double saucepan—(this should be enamelled) and heat very gradually until about 190 degrees have been reached. Give ten to twenty minutes at this temperature and they should then be sufficiently cooked, and still remain whole. By means of a wooden jam-spoon carefully fill the bottles, which have been warmed in readiness and then add syrup to within half an inch of the top. Screw down immediately. When cold test to see if bottles are airtight—if not heat the bottles as they are, on platform in cooking vessel, *with covers tightly fixed*, to 165 degrees and then take out and screw down. Care must be taken not to cook the tomatoes too much and experience will readily show just when they are quite fit. Much of course depends upon the degree of ripeness; while there may also be slight differences owing to different varieties of tomatoes.

——:o:——

We have made rather a strong point of the fact that no special apparatus is required. Not every home possesses a double saucepan such as described for bottling tomatoes, but this difficulty can be readily surmounted as follows:—if an enamelled basin is at hand (one suitable can be purchased as cheaply as 6½d.) An ordinary saucepan into which the enamelled basin will fit down somewhat can be partly filled with water. The basin should then be placed in position—it should touch the water, but ought not to go right into the saucepan, and should be held in position by the sides of the saucepan.

The tomatoes should be put into the basin and covered with syrup and to hold them under the syrup a plate which will fit down into the basin may be placed bottom upwards, on the top of the tomatoes. After the water in the saucepan has boiled for say ten minutes, lift the plate by means of a knife and cloth and examine the tomatoes. If not done, cover up again for a time and then examine again. A little of the water in the saucepan cooled down somewhat, may be put into the bottles and shaken round: this will warm them ready for the tomatoes. Rubber bands may also be warmed. When tomatoes are sufficiently cooked fill into the bottles and treat as described above.

——:o:——

The instructions we have given concerning the bottling of fruit are the result of experiences gained in preparing some hundreds of bottles. It may be, however, owing to some little difference in type of bottle, in the degree of ripeness of fruit, or in rapidity or slowness at which the sterilising is done, that some slight modification of our recipes may occasionally be found necessary. Experience and common sense must then be the guide. In all general cases we are convinced that the results will be gratifying if our instructions are carefully followed.

——:o:——

For some reason (generally through not properly sterilising, a flaw in the bottle or the cap or rubber not being fitted exactly), it may happen that the contents of a bottle will ferment, and go bad. It is well, then, to occasionally look over the bottled fruits for a few weeks after placing them away, and if the syrup in a bottle shows marked signs of discolouration or "muddiness" place the bottle on one side and watch carefully. If, when the bottle is quite at rest, bubbles rise through the syrup, then the contents are fermenting. In such a case the top layers of fruit and syrup should be poured off, and probably the remaining portion may be used.

Sometimes a little of the fruit in the bottle stands above the syrup and becomes discoloured. This will not matter and when the bottle is opened the discoloured fruit may be discarded.

If the fruit rises from the bottom of the bottle and floats in the syrup it may be that the fruit was not well packed. Some fruits, gooseberries for instance, rise owing to the fruit being lighter, bulk for bulk than the syrup.

It is well to bear in mind that when fruit is bottled it should not be cooked too much—it only requires thorough scalding or sterilising, a somewhat similar operation to scalding milk.

## STORING OF FRUIT.

Bottled fruit may be stored on open shelves or in cupboards. It may be taken as a general rule that where jam can be stored, bottled fruit can similarly be kept.

Strong light will tend to make the syrup darken, while in the case of strawberries light will tend to bleach the fruit. Hence if fruit is exposed on open shelves or cupboards it is well to cover over with sheets of brown paper.

## OPENING OF BOTTLES.

Bottled fruit may be used at any time—a few days, a few weeks or months after being prepared. The bottles should be carefully opened so that the rubbers and covers may be used again. For screwcapped bottles remove first of all the metal bands, and then to open, the point of a penknife or scissors inserted just above or below the rubber band, and moved a little will allow the air to penetrate. The pressure of the air thus removed, the cover may be easily taken off. In case any difficulty is experienced in opening a bottle, place it in a cool oven and warm, or place it in cold water and heat. When hot the covers can generally be removed with ease. When opened, the fruit if quite soft, may be used as it is cold, if bottled in syrup, but we prefer to put it into a stew pan, adding sugar according to taste, and bringing it to the boil for a minute or so. The fruit may then be served like freshly stewed fruit, from which it will be difficult to distinguish it.

Fruit when once opened should be used within a few days as it will not keep good any more than stewed fresh fruit would do.

## USE OF FRUIT.

There is one bad mark to be scored against bottled fruit, and that is its use for Tarts, as being saturated in syrup it tends to make the pastry sodden, but good cooks will know how to overcome difficulties of this kind.

A most delicious dish which can be quickly prepared, may be made by serving the fruit with either Custard or Blanc Mange, while Cream is certainly not to be despised.

Another well-known and delightful way of using soft fruits such as Raspberries, Raspberries and Currants, or other mixed fruits, is to put the fruit into the stew pan, add a little sugar to taste, then bring to the boil. Meanwhile, line a basin with sponge cakes—a more economical way, however, and one which answers equally well, is to use slices of stale bread, without crusts, in place of the sponge cakes. Pour the hot fruit into the basin and then cover it with more cakes or slices of bread. Place a plate, weighted, over the top and set aside till cold. Turn out into a deep dish and pour over it a custard and set aside again till cold. It is better to prepare this dish the day before it is required so that the bread or cakes may be properly saturated with the syrup. This recipe is a good one from another standpoint in that it allows all the syrup to be used with the fruit.

There are of course many other ways of serving bottled fruit, and for these we

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Alfred Bird & Sons, Birmingham (The proprietors of Bird's Custard Powder) in their book "Pastry & Sweets" give a number of recipes for using bottled fruit. They will on receipt of name and address of any reader be pleased to forward free a copy of this work.

must refer our readers to their own experiences or to their cookery books. There is often more syrup in a bottle than is needed for use with the fruit, if so, the surplus may be utilised for making fruit beverages, jellies, etc.

## EMPTY BOTTLES.

When emptied, the bottles before being stored away, should be thoroughly cleansed with scalding (not boiling) water and placed to drain. The rubbers, covers, and screw bands should also be washed and wiped quite dry.

The rubbers may be stored inside the bottles. Metal covers require to be stored in a perfectly dry place or they will rust. If it should happen that some of the rubber rings or other parts need renewing get these at once and not wait until the bottles are wanted and be disappointed in consequence. If bottles are thus carefully tended they may be used over and over again.

———:o:———

We believe there is a great future for Home-bottled fruits and we have endeavoured to show that the process is by no means a "fancy one, but is simple, sure, and reliable, where pains are taken. We do not wish bottling to be regarded as only providing a means for utilising an occasional surplus stock of fruit. We look upon it as being as indispensable to a household as the making of jams, marmalade, or pickles. Viewed in this light a dozen bottles may well form the stock for the first year and each year extra bottles may be added until a sufficient stock has been accumulated. Each must, of course, decide how may bottles will be likely to be required for use during the year. For a household of four or five persons four dozen bottles in all may prove sufficient, while six dozen may not prove any too many.

It is, of course, much the best to use fruit grown in one's own garden because it may be gathered when it is in just the fittest state of ripeness, and also the fruit may be more carefully selected, and so be free from bruises, etc. Where fruit cannot be obtained at home it is well to try and get it fresh from the growers rather than from shops, as by so doing it is likely to be subjected to less handling.

——o:o——

It may not be altogether out of place to remark that may persons grow in their gardens fruit—currants, gooseberries, apples, etc.—of very inferior sorts. This is a great mistake, for the same land and culture would serve to grow the best varieties. It is better, then, where inferior fruit is grown to gradually root up the poor varieties and replace with new stocks which can be relied upon to produce the finest and best fruit. Any nurseryman of repute will be pleased to advise on a choice of suitable fruit stock.

——o:o——

The bottling of vegetables we have not entered upon except in the case of tomatoes and chiefly for the reason that vegetables are fairly plentiful all the year round and only in one or two instances—peas, kidney beans, asparagus—are they suitable for bottling. They require different treatment altogether from fruit.

——:o:——

We would again impress the importance of using sound fruit in perfect condition, and also to make sure that strict cleanliness is observed in regard to fruit and all utensils used—bottles and parts. No preservatives whatever are used, with the exception of sugar, nor are any required. Bottled fruit should, if required, keep for years.

——:o:——

The writer will be pleased at any time to give, as far as he can, further information on any points that may be desired in connection with this subject, while at the same time he will be thankful to receive any corrections or suggestions for the improvement of the book.

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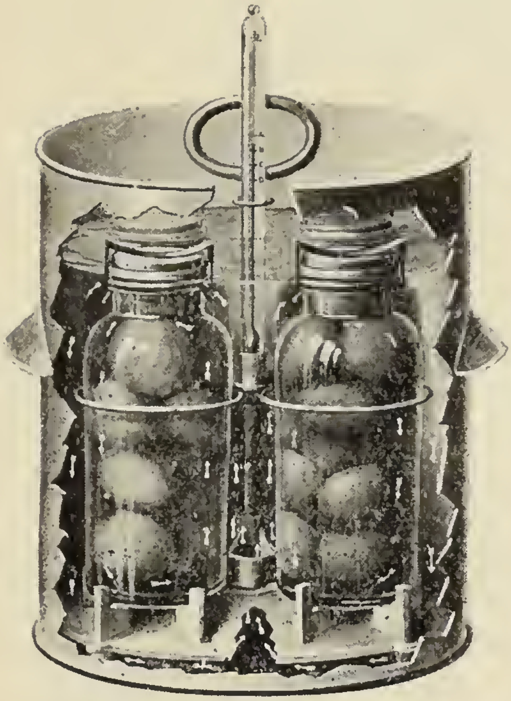

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